



PUBLIC NOTICE

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SAVE THE DATE: FCC TO HOLD DIGITAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

*Connect2Health^{FCC} Task Force Hosting Symposium on
Advancing Broadband Connectivity as a Social Determinant of Health*

GN Docket No. 22-43

Washington, D.C. – On March 3, 2022, starting at 10:00 am EST, the Federal Communications Commission’s Connect2Health Task Force (Task Force) will host the *FCC Digital Health Symposium: Advancing Broadband Connectivity as a Social Determinant of Health*.

This virtual event will gather public and private sector thought leaders from a variety of disciplines, including telecommunications and health care, to discuss issues around recognizing broadband connectivity as a “social determinant of health.” Social determinants of health reflect the fact that health begins where we live, learn, work, and play; they are the non-medical factors (including education, health care access, income, and employment) that affect health or can serve as a predictor of one’s health status. Participants will also explore the implications of this framework for national broadband policies, population health, and government-wide efforts to address health inequities. Achieving digital health equity through improving broadband access and adoption is an FCC priority and will be an overarching theme of this event.

This symposium recognizes the increasing evidence demonstrating a strong relationship between broadband access, Internet adoption, and health. For many years, stakeholders have viewed broadband as a critical means to connect healthcare providers to patients and to close gaps related to time and distance, but, unfortunately, many Americans are still falling through the broadband health gap. The COVID-19 pandemic has put a spotlight on health inequities and broadband gaps, including for people of color as well as people living in rural, tribal, and other underserved communities. Hence, it is critical to ensure that the benefits of broadband connectivity are available to everyone, everywhere.

The Task Force’s research over the years indicates that one promising solution may lie in a paradigm shift—in recognizing that broadband plays a more direct and consequential role—as a social determinant of health, if not as a “super” determinant of health. The Task Force’s Advancing Broadband Connectivity as a Social Determinant of Health Initiative is pursuing this promising research to inform public policy and help close the digital divide in health. Additional information about this Initiative, including prior and ongoing research and analytics work in this field, is available at www.fcc.gov/health/SDOH.

WHAT: *FCC Digital Health Symposium: Advancing Broadband Connectivity as a Social Determinant of Health*

Participants will, among other things:

- elicit and discuss perspectives and identify insights on broadband connectivity as a social determinant of health;
- explore the future of broadband-enabled health technologies (e.g., home hospital) and how FCC policies and programs could support ongoing innovations within the social determinants of health framework;
- identify seminal literature and data sources and future research needs; and
- frame a call-to-action for additional research and a policy roadmap to support and establish broadband connectivity as a social determinant of health domain.

Additional details, including an event agenda and panelists, will be issued at a later date. Details will also be posted on the Connect2Health^{FCC} Task Force's website, at www.fcc.gov/health.

WHEN: Thursday, March 3, 2022 (10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. EST)

WHO: Policymakers, industry leaders, physicians, public health specialists, researchers, health organizations, broadband providers, telecommunications executives, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders interested in the intersection of broadband connectivity and health, as well as in digital equity and health equity.

REGISTRATION:

This virtual public event is free and will be accessible to the public via Zoom.gov. To register, please visit:
https://mitre.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_vQdwl_nVSmyEIqdk2dJNPA

Online captioning will be provided for this event. Other reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are available upon request. Requests for such accommodations should be submitted via e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or by calling the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418-0530 (voice). Such requests should include a detailed description of the accommodation needed. In addition, please include a way for the FCC to contact the requester if more information is needed to fill the request. Last minute requests will be accepted, but may be impossible to fill.

QUESTIONS: For event questions, contact the Connect2Health^{FCC} Task Force by e-mail at connect2health@fcc.gov, and insert "Symposium Question" in the subject line. For press inquiries, please contact Katie Gorscak, FCC Office of Media Relations, by e-mail at Katie.Gorscak@fcc.gov.

More information about the Connect2Health^{FCC} Task Force is available at www.fcc.gov/health.

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